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ABSTRACT

A handbook and teachers guide to phonics and the initial teaching alphabet (ITA) is given. The use of phonics to teach reading is described with the appropriate rules and steps. The principals of ITA and several practice lessons on using ITA are supplied. (WH)

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Phonics/ita Handbook for Teachers

Part I

Phonics

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INTRODUCTION TO PART I

The prime purpose of phonics is to assist a learner in becoming a more independent reader by providing him with a means of decoding. This decoding takes the form of learning appropriate letter-sound relationships. When the learner applies phonics in reading, he translates the graphemes (written representation of a sound) into known speech sounds (phonemes) and eventually blends these into words.

Phonics instruction can be classified as synthetic or analytic. These two approaches mainly differ in the amount of attention given to meaning, the amount of phonics in initial instruction, the method of teaching sounds of letters, and the importance of developing a sight vocabulary in the beginning phase.

The synthetic approach starts with the study of individual letter sounds and builds words by combining the separate sounds into pronounceable units.

The analytic approach begins with a whole word or sentence which is analyzed into smaller parts. An analytic approach stresses the meaning component of the reading process and the importance of building a sight vocabulary. If, for example, the learner has internalized the words hat, hut, and hub, he may then study the sound of the initial grapheme consonant h with numerous word examples.

For the most part the phonics method is synthetic since it usually begins with the study of individual letters and sounds rather than with the analysis of known words.

As with any reading approach, the issue of readiness is a prime factor that cannot escape the facilitation of phonics instruction. The ability to learn and apply phonics principles requires cognitive mental ability while the learning of sight words requires rote-memory. It is commonly recommended that the major part of phonics instruction be placed in grades two and three because the majority of first grade learners are not equipped to profit from such instruction.

The importance providing early auditory discrimination (ear training) is necessarily linked with visual perception training. The order for increasing difficulty among phonics principles is initial consonant sounds, final consonant sounds, long vowel sounds, and short vowel sounds. Without question, phonics is marked by rule learning and application.

It should be kept in mind, however, that by the full recognition that each learner is different it becomes apparent that different modes of instruction should be used for maximizing reading skills and abilities. It would be unsafe to force rules of phonics upon a learner who is incapable at a given point in time, to distill meaning from these rules and to apply these rules in the active and continual process of decoding and comprehension. Phonics then is a means of helping decode printed matter for increased control and comprehension.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE OF INSTRUCTION

Phonics Readiness

I. Prerequisites for Phonics Analysis

The child should:

1. have an adequate sight vocabulary
2. have keen auditory discrimination and recognition of speech sounds in words.
3. have keen visual discrimination and recognition of printed symbols.
4. know letters of the alphabet by name and shape.

Remember: Children should be tested on all phonics readiness skills

but

they need only be instructed in the areas they have not mastered.

Sequence of Phonics Instruction

1. Initial consonant sounds and letters (except letters g, v, y, z, k, x)
2. Substitution of known initial consonant sounds
3. consonant sounds and letters in final position (except letters h, j, w)
4. Initial consonant blends
5. Substitution of initial consonant blends
6. Consonant blends in final position
7. Consonant digraphs
8. Long and short vowel sounds (order does not matter)
9. Vowel and consonant irregularities

Basic Steps for Phonics Instruction

1. Write letters for instruction on the board, upper and lower case.
2. Place stimulus words on the board.
3. Have children see the letter/letter combination under discussion.
4. Teacher pronounces each word carefully so that the children can hear the sound at the designated position in the word.
5. Have children pronounce words.
6. Invite children to supply other words which have sound in designated position.
7. Have children pronounce new words containing the sound.

Consonant Instruction

I. Rationale

Consonant sounds, specifically initial consonant sounds, are a good starting point for phonics instruction.

Reasoning for above statement:

1. Consonant letters are more numerous than vowel letters.
2. Consonant letter-sound relationships. (exceptions: letters c, g, s, x, l).
3. Since most English words begin with consonants, the first letter(s) a child must sound in an unknown word are consonants.

Note:

In this handbook, an underlined letter or letter cluster such as g, or ph or an underlined word or word-form such as pat or -er indicate written (graphemic) representations; quotation marks, "k", are used to indicate the sound (phonemic) representations.

4. Consonant sounds, to a large extent, influence adjacent vowel sounds.
5. Initial sound in a word is the easiest to identify.

II. Teaching Technique

1. Print letter, capital and lower case, on the board.
2. Print several familiar words beginning with the consonant sound on board. Pronounce them.
3. The teacher directs the children's attention visually to the beginning letters (if teaching initial consonants) or ending letters (if teaching final consonants) of the words.
4. The teacher pronounces the words directing the pupils auditory attention to sounds under instruction.
5. The pupils pronounce and hear the sound.
6. Pupils give words that begin/end with the same sound as the stimulus words.
7. Ask pupils to look for likenesses in the words.

III. Teaching Principles

1. No letter is sounded in isolation.
2. Each stimulus is meaningful; it is a complete word.
3. The letter is called by its name.
4. Teach pupils to associate the sounds with both capital and lower case letters.
5. Initial sound is emphasized but not distorted.

Consonant Blends

I. Objectives in Teaching Consonant Blends

The child must:

1. see the letters which make up the combination
2. associate the sounds with the letters
3. discriminate between the blend sound and the sound of individual letters.

II. Blenders - l r s

The l and r are usually in the final, or second, position of the blend. The s occupies the first position.

III. Two-letter Consonant Blends

bl	br	sc
cl	cr	sk*
fl	fr	sm
gl	gr	sn
pl	pr	sp*
sl	tr	st*
		sw

*These are both final and initial consonant blends

IV. Three-letter Consonant Blends

chr	as in chrome
sch	as in school
scr	as in scream
shr	as in shrunk
spl	as in splash
spr	as in spring
squ	as in squash
str	as in street
thr	as in threw

Consonant Digraphs

I. H digraphs	grapheme	sounds
	ch	"sh" as in machine
		"ch" as in church
		"k" as in chorus
	gh	"f" as in laugh (always at end of word)
		"g" as in ghetto (at beginning)

	ph	"f" as in phone
	sh	"sh" as in shut
	th	"th" (voiced as in other; voiceless as in think)
	wh	"hw" or a single "w"

II. K digraph

ck	as in freckle

III. G digraph

ng	as in sing

Syllabication

To syllabicate is to divide, or break, a word into its spelling patterns. The spelling patterns are called syllables. The following rules should be followed when dividing words into syllables:

1. Every syllable must have at least one vowel sound. A word cannot have more syllables than vowel sounds.
2. If two separate-sounding consonants follow a vowel, the division is between the consonants, as in:

   at tic oc cur or der
3. If only one consonant follows a vowel, the consonant usually starts the second syllable.

   si nus ro bot pi lot
4. If a word ends in -le, the letter before the l should be added to the last syllable:

   dab ble lit tle ket tle
5. Remember: Do not divide digraphs and blends.

Vowel Principles

I. Procedual Steps

1. Vowel letters are printed on board.
2. Stimulus words are presented.
3. Children look at letter(s) in words.
4. Children listen to sound as pronounced by teacher.
5. Children hear the sound as they pronounce the words.
6. Children state generalization.

II. Short Vowel Generalization

If there is one vowel letter in a word, whether it is in the beginning of the word or in the medial position, the sound of the vowel letter is short.

III. Y and W as vowels

Two consonant letters that represent sounds in certain situations are y and w.

1. Y

-when y is in a syllable with no other vowels, and in the medial position, the sound of y is a short "i". (as in gyp)
-when y is a one syllable word or just one syllable and in the final position of the word the sound of y is a long "i". (as in my)
-when y is in a owrd of two or more syllables and in the final position, the sound of y is a long "e". (as in can-dy)

2. W

-when w follows a vowel, in the same syllable, w stands for a vowel. (as in draw)

Point to remember: When y and w represent vowel sounds, the combinations they form with other vowel letters follow the same rules as other vowel-vowel letter combinations.

IV. Long Vowel Generalizations

1. A single vowel letter at the end of a word or syllable usually represents its long vowel sound.
2. Silent -e rule: When a word has two vowel letters, one of which is a final -e separated by one consonant letter, the first vowel letter usually represents its long vowel sound; the final -e is silent.
3. Adjacent Rule: When there are two adjacent vowel letters in a word, the first vowel letter usually represents its long vowel sound, the second vowel letter is silent.

V. Vowel diphthongs

oi	as in oil	These two are always diphthongs.
oy		
ow	"o" (grow)	These two are sometimes not diphthongs.
	can be long "o" (soul)	
ou	can be short "u" (touch)	

When ow and ou are diphthongs they are both sounded like the ou in out or like the ow in frown

To determine the appropriate sound use content clues. If the content clues are of no help then use the following order:

1. diphthong
2. long "o"
3. short "u"

Note: The diphthong is to vowels what a blend is to consonants. A diphthong is two vowels sounds which blend. If said slowly, both vowel sounds will be heard. Likewise, a blend is two consonants sounds which blend together. Both consonants sounds can be heard.

VI. Vowel Digraphs

A vowel digraph is a vowel letter combination which represents a single distinct sound. Below are digraphs:

ai	ea	ie	oa	ue
aw	ee		oe	ui
ay	ei			uy
	eu			
	ew			
	ey			

Digraphs which follow the adjacent rule are also called regular digraphs. They are as follows:

ai	ea	oa
ay	ee	oe

VII. Irregular Digraphs

uy	-	long "i" sound
ew	-	
eu	-	long "u" sound
ue	-	
ei	-	long "a" or long "e" sound
ey	-	long "a" or long "e" or long "i" sound
ie	-	long "e" or long "i" sound

Consonant Irregularities

I. Hard and Soft Consonants

The letter c is soft when followed by e, i, or y
The letter g is soft when followed by e, i or y

II. Difficult Consonant Letters

There are seven difficult consonant letters:

1. k - The sound of the letter k is often confused with the sound of the letter c.
2. q - The letter q is always followed by the letter u. The sound of the letters qu equals "kw".
3. v - Very few words have the "v" sound.
4. x - "ks" as in box
   "gz" as in exit
   "ksh" as in anxious
   "z" as in xylophone
   "gzh" as in luxury
5. y - The letter y is both a vowel and consonant.
6. z - Very few words are written with the letter z.
7. s - Sometimes has a "z" sound.

III. Silent Consonants

Consonant Letter	When silent
b	when b follows m as in dumb; when b precedes t in the same syllable - doubt
g	before n and m in the same syllable - gnat
gh	when it follows the sound of long "i" or long "a" - night or sleigh
h	after a vowel sound; after the letters k, g, and r at the beginning of a word
k	before the letter n - knot
l	before the letter m, or k in the same syllable
p	when followed by the letters t, s or n psalm, pneumonia
t	when it follows the letters f or s in the same syllable - often, whistle
w	when it precedes the letter r - wrangler

Irregularities

I. Schwa

The schwa sound is like that of the short "u" sound. It is the vowel sound of a vowel letter in the unaccented syllable as in lemon and pencil.

Attention should be called to the schwa sound in two syllable words in beginning phonics instruction. Then teach the schwa sound and symbol when the child begins to meet unfamiliar poly-syllabic words and learns how to use a dictionary.

II. R - controlled vowels

R affects the sound of a preceding vowel when both are in the same syllable. The sound is neither long nor short.

R affects the vowel sound by blending the sound "r" with the vowel sound.

III. Double O

The double o (oo) has two sounds; that of long and short.

Long "oo" - key word: oodles
pool, loop, too, food, soon, boot

Short "oo" - key word: oomph
wood, look, foot, book, stood

IV. Effects on letter A by consonants

The consonant letters l, w u and ll affect the sound of the letter a. The affect is represented by the sound "aw" as in all, awkward, author.

V. Long Sound of Vowel

O and I vowel letters have a long sound when used in these combinations:

old	-	When the letter o is followed by ld, the sound of o is long "o" as in scold.
ild	-	When the letter i is followed by nd, gh, or ld, the sound of i is frequently a long "i" sound as in wind, sight, wild.
igh		
ind		

GLOSSARY

1. Auditory Discrimination -
   The ability to see similarities and differences in printed letters.
2. Consonant Blends
   Two consonants blended together so that the sound of each consonant is heard distinctly.
3. Consonant Digraph -
   Two consonant letters representing a single, distinct sound that may be unlike either single letter sound.
4. Phonics -
   A method of teaching the sounds represented by letters and letter combinations.
5. Phonic Analysis -
   The process of pronouncing unfamiliar words by relating sounds to letters
6. Schwa -
   The schwa sound represents the mid-vowel sound. It sounds like a "deep" short "u". The vowel of an unaccented syllable is usually the schwa sound.
7. Syllabication -
   The process of dividing words into syllables
8. Vowel Digraph -
   A vowel letter combination which represents a single distinct sound.
9. Vowel Diphthongs -
   A vowel-vowel combination that blend to represent a single sound. This sound is a blend of the separate vowel sounds. (A diphthong is to vowels what a blend is to consonants.)

Phonics/ita Handbook for Teachers

PART II

ita

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INTRODUCTION TO PART II

What is ITA?

The Initial Teaching Alphabet or ita has a long history. In fact, over 130 years ago, Sir Isaac Pitman started work on an alphabet which could effectively initiate beginning reading. Pitman's work was continued by his son and then by his grandson, Sir James Pitman, who developed the present ita alphabet.

The large scale appearance of ita on the educational scene has, however, been fairly recent. Initially it was used in a research study conducted by the Reading Research Unit of the University of London in 1961. Over 100,000 children were using the alphabet in Great Britain by the Fall of 1965. Research projects in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Cleveland, Ohio and White Plains, New York, began in the fall of 1963. At the present time, ita has been used on an experimental basis in almost every state in the United States.

The basic function of ita is to act as an initial teaching medium, usually in grades K through 3. It has, however, met with success in remedial work with both elementary and secondary pupils as well as special education students, students with speech and language problems, emotionally disturbed children, and illiterate adults.

Forty-four characters are used to represent the forty sounds of English. The sound that each symbol represents is taught rather than the letter name. From the beginning, the student learns that each sound-symbol represents its own sound.

Pitman's original aim was to develop a systematic and simple medium for beginning reading. An effort has been made to make ita compatible with conventional or traditional orthography, TO, so that transition from ita to TO is less difficult. Double letters are retained as well as the standard alphabet letters. In addition, ita has preserved the top shape or configuration of TO letters which may make it easier for the student to transfer from ita to TO.

Figure 1 shows the ita symbols, Figure 2 shows the location of the ita symbols on the CAI keyboard.

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Initial Teaching Alphabet

Figure 1

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Figure 2

Principles of ita

1. All letters in ita are lower case. Pitman's ita sound-symbols for capital letters are approximately one and one-half the size of the lower case. However, in our program, only lower case letters will be used.
2. Punctuation marks in ita are the same as those used in TO.
3. Consonants which are doubled in TO are also doubled in ita spellings.
4. Foreign words and names retain their traditional spelling in ita material.
5. Silent letters in TO are not represented in ita.
6. Twenty-four of the twenty-six letters in the traditional alphabet have been retained. The letters q and x are excluded. The sounds usually associated with these two letters in TO are represented by the symbols kw and ks.
7. Since each symbol represents its own sound, abbreviations are not used in ita.
8. In TO, the schwa is the vowel sound in the unaccented syllable. It is the sound heard in above, bottom, and elephant.

   There is no special ita sound-sumbol to represent the schwa. When the schwa is heard, use the vowel that is used in the TO spellings.
9. Vowels
   a. Short vowel sounds are represented by traditional letter forms.
   b. The long vowel sounds are represented by special double characters: æ, ee, ie, œ, ue.
10. The letter y in both TO and ita can be either a consonant or a vowel. In ita, the y is retained whenever its sound is a long "e", short "e", or a short "i".

11. Digraphs

The TO digraph is a combination of two consonants which represent a new sound. The ita sound-symbol is also represented by one sound. Six ita sound-symbols represent the TO digraph characters: ʰh, wh, ŋ, and ʧh.

The two th sound-symbols represent voiced and unvoiced sounds as heard in such words as bathe and bath. In the voiced form, the tail in the t is reversed, ʰh. The tail on the t in the unvoiced form extends below the base line, ʧh.

12. The sound-symbol s is used to represent the sound of s as heard in sit, city and tops.

13. When the z sound in a word is traditionally spelled with the letter z as in zebra and zoo, the ita sound symbol for the traditional z is used.

14. The ƨ has the same sound as the regular z, but is the reverse form of that character. It is used to replace the inconsistent s in TO spellings such as is, busy, or cheese.

15. The sound-symbol ʒ is used to represent the sound of s, z, g, and dg in words such as treasure, azure, beige, and bridge.

16. The letter c

In both traditional orthography and ita, the letter c has no sound of its own but rather borrows the sounds associated with the letters k and s. If the c is represented by the sound of k, the c is said to have the hard sound as in cape.

If the c is represented by the sound associated with the letter s, it is said to have the soft sound as in city.

Both the c and k are used to represent the hard sound of c as heard in cake. The decision to use one or the other is based on the TO spelling.

If there is a ck appearing together, as in the word sack, both the c and k are retained.

When the hard sound occurs in a word which has neither a c or k in it, such as tax, the k is used (taks), because the k is much closer to the x in shape than the c.

17. The g in TO and ita also has a hard and soft sound. The ita sound-symbol g represents the hard g sound as heard in dog, whereas the j is used for the soft g sound in gym.

18. The letter r

If e, i, u or y are followed by an r in the same syllable, the sound of the vowel is changed. A new ita sound-symbol represents this r.

The tail appended to the r (ɾ) is a signal that the sound of the preceding vowel has been changed.

When the sound of er, as in fur, is heard in some words spelled with an o-r such as work, worth, or word, the o is changed to u in the ita spelling.

19. The character ʊ represents the sound heard in foot or put.

20. The ita character ω represents the sound heard in do, few and too.

21. The ita character ɑ has two sounds. It can sound like the a in car or carpet or like the a in apple.

22. The vowel sound heard in fall is represented by the ita sound-symbol ɑu.

23. The ita sound-symbol ɑi represents the sound heard in toil or boy.

24. The character ɑu represents the vowel sound heard in towel or scout.

Practice printing the special ita sound-symbols on the following pages.

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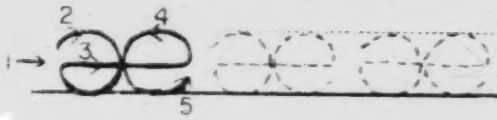

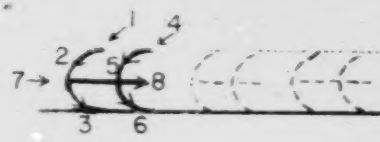

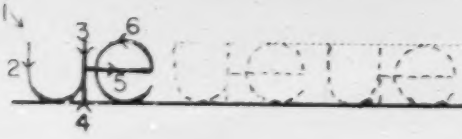

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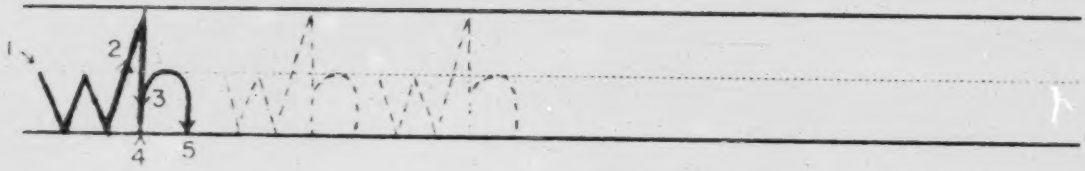

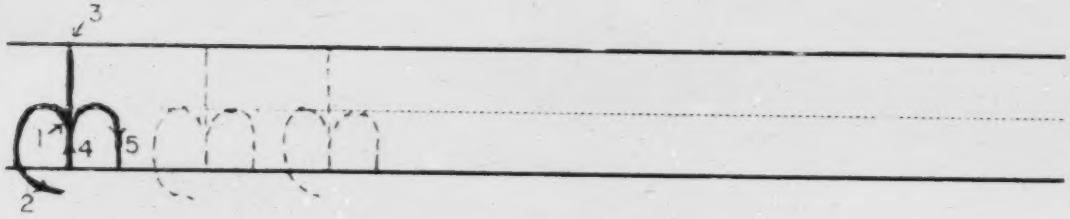

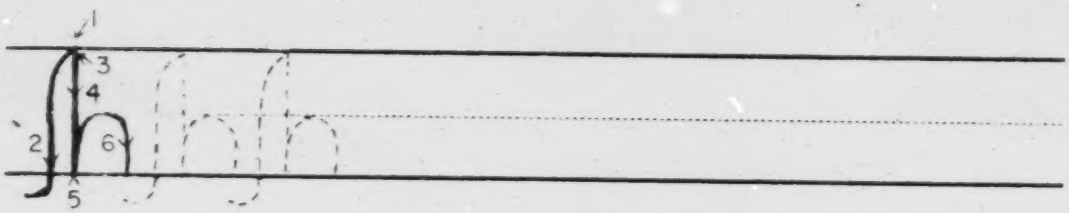

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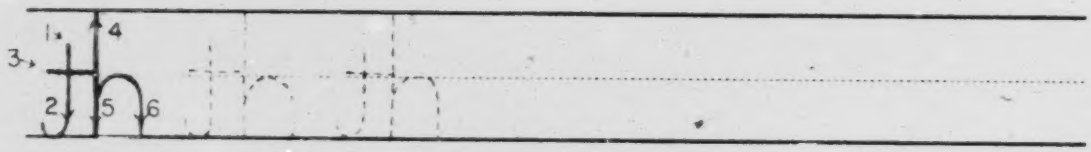

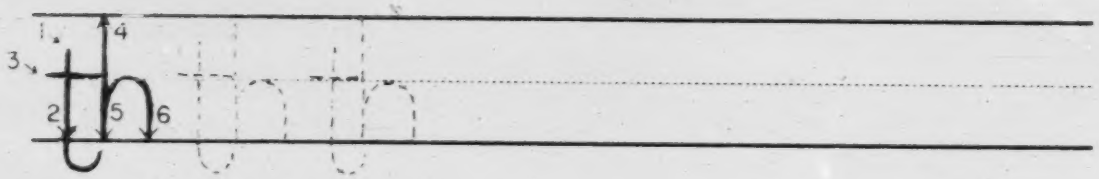

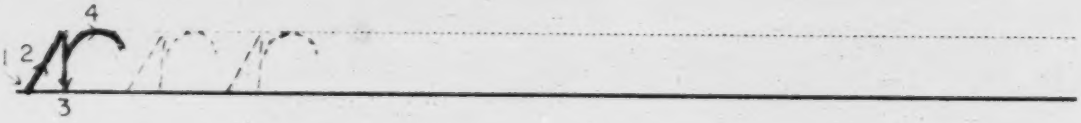

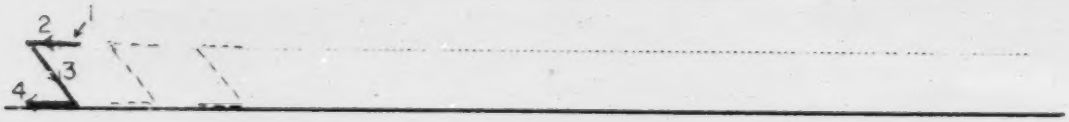

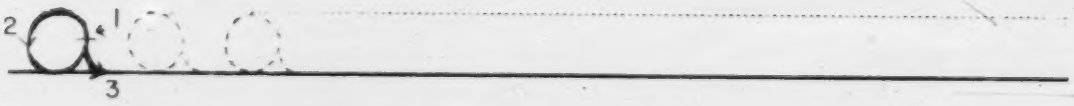

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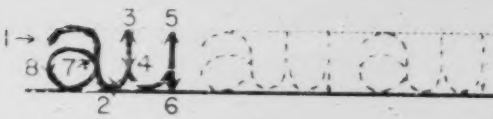

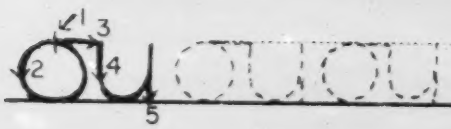

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Practice Lesson 1

In transliterating, or changing from one alphabet to another, it is a ~~good~~ practice to:

1. Say the word to yourself.
2. Listen to the sound or sounds in the word.
3. Print the word in ita using the required character or characters for each sound.

People from various sections of the country may pronounce words differently due to their unique speech patterns. Your transliteration, therefore, may not be exactly the same as the key transliteration.

1.1 Transliterate the following words into ita. Check your answers with the key.

boat	sit	site	stopped
none	lemon	maybe	redone
sack	pupil	elm	us

1.2 Print the following abbreviations in ita.

hr.	min.	Dr.
R. R.	P. O.	Mr.

1.3 Transliterate the following words into ita. Check your work with the key.

yell	happy	syrup
try	day	

Practice Lesson 2

2.1 Write the following ita sentences in TO.

1. miste jœns is trubld. his luggæj wus lost at ðu æɾport.

2. ðu cumpany address is pɹe stɹeet, ɹedɪŋ, œhiœe.

2.2 Transliterate the following TO words into ita.

cell	kick	except	public
fox	cannot	ship	why
cheap	coming	they	thin

2.3 Print the following TO words in ita. Check your work with the transliteration key at the end of the handbook.

sit	city	tops	busy
cheese	zebra	treasure	azure
beige	bridge	ladies	zeal

Practice Lesson 3

3.1 Try employing your newly learned principles by printing the following words in ita.

mother	circus
polar	turtle
worm	author
fur	martyr
ball	lawn

3.2 Print these phrases in TO.

1. at bræk ov dæ.

2. ries and faull ov thu roemun empier.

3.3 Can you now print this TO sentence in ita? Try it. Check your answer with the transliteration key at the end of the handbook.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

Practice Lesson 4

The ita program starts the "beginner" on an alphabet which maintains a one-to-one correspondence between the sound (phoneme) and the written character (grapheme). The student associates each of the alphabet's forty-four characters with only one sound.

In the school program, the language experience approach accompanies the introduction of the characters. In this approach, children, individually or in groups, dictate stories to the teacher. She or he immediately writes the stories on either the blackboard, oaktag or newsprint. Through the use of experience stories, children learn that written language represents speech and, at the same time, they begin to acquire a sight vocabulary. There is a gradual progression to simple stories with increased vocabulary.

4.1 The following paragraph is a shortened version of one written by a first grade student from a disadvantaged background after a trip to the seashore. Remember when transliterating that the sentence structure may be different from yours. Print the story in TO.

wɛ went on ðu bus tω ðu sɛɛ ʃor. wɛ found sum ʃells and a ded fiʃ . wɛ had sɔɛ much fun at ðu sɛɛ ʃor. ðu fiʃ wus liet blω. hɛɛ wus sɔɛ nies ðat ie liekt him.

Practice Lesson 5

The following story was written about Robert Kennedy by a post-ita second grader.

Kennedy was a good man.
He worked for our country.
It was a shame for him to die.
His brother was a good man too.
Kennedy's father and mother begged him not to run for President.
Even his brothers and sisters told him not to run.
All I can say is that he would be a very good President for our country.

5.1 Print the story in ita checking your answers on the transliteration key.

1. Kennedy was a good man.

2. He worked for our country.

3. It was a shame for him to die.

4. His brother was a good man too.

5. Kennedy's father and mother begged him not to run for President.

6. Even his brothers and sisters told him not to run.

7. All I can say is that he would be a very good President for our country.

Key to Transliteration Exercises

1.1	lʊt	sɪt	siet	stoppt
	rʌn	lemʊn or lemon	mɛɛbɛɛ	rɛɛdun
	sack	pɛɛpil or pɛɛpul	elm	us
1 2	ɑɑr	minit	doctor	
	prɛst offɪs	rɛɛl rɛɛd	mister	
1 3	yell	happy	syrup	
	trɛɛ	dɛɛ		

2 1 1 Mr. Jones is troubled. His luggage was lost at the airport.

2 The company address is Pugh Street, Reading, Ohio.

2.2	sell	kick	eksept	public
	foks	cannot	ʃip	whe
	ðrɛp	cumiŋ	ðɛɛ	θin
2 3	sɪt	sɪty	tops	bɪzy
	ðrɛɜ	zɛɛbra	trɛʒɜr	aʒɜr
	brɛɜ	brɪdʒ	lɛɛdyɜ	zɛɛl
	bʊll	lʌn		

3 1	mʊðer	sɜrcus
	pɛlar	tɜrtl
	wɜrm	au ðɜr
	fɜr	martyr
	bʊll	lʌn

3 2 1 At break of day.

2 Rise and fall of the Roman Empire.

3 3 a littl noledʒ iz a dænjerus thiŋ.

4 1 We went on the bus to the seashore. We found some shells and a dead fish. We had so much fun at the seashore. The fish was light blue. He was so nice that I liked him.

5 1

1 kennedy wuz a gʊd man.

2 hee wurkt for our cuntry.

3 it wuz a ʃhem for him tʊ die.

4 his bruther wuz a gʊd man tʊ.

5 kennedy's fother and muther beggd him not tʊ run for president.

6 even his bruthers and sisters tæld him not tʊ run.

7 aul ie can see iz that hee wʊd bee a very gʊd president for our cuntry.

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